

JPRS-NEA-93-060
3 MAY 1993



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Near East & South Asia

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REPRODUCED BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22161

Near East & South Asia

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Internal Affairs

Reasons Behind al-Turabi's Power Explored

93AF0485C London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
10 Mar 93 pp 30-31

[Article: "New Details and Information About Striking Military Wing of al-Turabi's Front"]

[Text] Khartoum—The question recurring and reiterated since the inception of the military coup and the creation of the so-called Salvation Revolution in Sudan in wake of the overthrow of the democratic regime is: Who rules Sudan? Is it Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, or the Army?

The truth is that there is a riddle here that perplexes many. Dr. al-Turabi is eager to assert that the front has been dissolved, the same as the other parties, namely al-Ummah Party, the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP], the communist party, and the Ba'th Party, and that this front exists no longer as an organization even if it exists and is influential as a general tendency. Lieutenant General al-Bashir, who has become more sensitive than necessary, is eager to assert for reason and for no reason that the Revolution Command Council is the actual ruler of Sudan and that there is nobody else who is the backseat driver of the regime's vehicle.

This is why Sudanese citizens consider it a source of ridicule in their private get-togethers when they hear al-Turabi talk about dissolution of the Islamic Front and about its having no connection with the regime and when they see Lt. Gen. al-Bashir on television, receiving visitors and presidents who come to Khartoum, acting as if he were the actual ruler and not just somebody who wears the military uniform and the mask behind which al-Turabi, the sly fox, moves.

AL-MAJALLAH has conducted large-scale inquiries and surveys and has interviewed a large number of both opposition and government figures. It has also interviewed a large number of middle-of-the-road figures. Most of the testimony obtained by AL-MAJALLAH confirms that the actual ruler of Sudan is not al-Bashir alone nor al-Turabi alone, but a secret organization comprised of 40 officers of different ranks who pull the strings of the puppet show and who are closer to the Islamic Front.

'Revolution' and Experiment

What is this organization, and how was it formed? How has al-Turabi managed to ride this organization's wave as he had ridden numerous waves before?

The story is long and intricate. To begin with, it must be noted that the perceived authors and the actual authors of the Salvation Front coup had planned to emulate the Iranian experiment to its last detail. Al-Turabi would perform the role of Imam Khomeyni, the guide, or at

least the role of Khamene'i, while al-Bashir would perform the role of Hashemi-Rafsanjani, despite the vast difference in concepts and in capabilities.

Within this framework, those who are closely acquainted with the real situation in Sudan, including a number of prominent opposition figures who held high positions in previous administrations, say that the coup government that tried to emulate the Iranian "revolution" has become like the crow that tried to walk like a dove and ended up being unable to imitate this walk or to maintain its original walk. A prominent former official, whose name we will not divulge so as to preserve his safety, said that the Iranian experiment relies on clear and well-known methodological bases. These bases have been developed over hundreds of years, and they are founded on the Shiite legal religious opinion that believes in the imamate. As for the coup government, its position is like a mosaic. It is steered by the facts of the situation. Consequently, there is no similarity between it and the Iranian "revolution."

This former official went on to say that it is impossible to deny that Dr. al-Turabi is extraordinarily intelligent and that he has great ambitions. But he will under no circumstance attain the status of Khomeyni, whom he has tried to emulate and in whose personality he has tried to wrap himself, even if he manages to impose his control on the front, which he leads, and to absorb the military phenomenon for a while.

Backtracking

Despite this diagnosis, the questions persist. Who rules Sudan, and how are the fundamental and difficult decisions made? What is the true nature of the relationship between Dr. al-Turabi, the coup guide, and Lieutenant General al-Bashir, its facade, and the military team that calls itself the Revolution Command Council?

What is certain is that 'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha, al-Turabi's deputy, is the man who planned the coup and who is in charge of relations between the front and the military.

Reports indicate that second-line officers and junior officers who belong to and support the Islamic Front proceeded to set up a closed and semiconfidential organization, with a leadership consisting of 40 officers from the various branches of the service, when they sensed some vacillation on the part of the front in the early days of the coup and when they had doubts about the intentions of al-Bashir and his military team. This organization has become the actual ruler and the influential decisionmaker, not just in the Army, but in all aspects of Sudanese life.

It is definite that this committee [organization], which is headed by Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, who was recently appointed interior minister, is the actual ruler of Sudan and that it is the riddle behind all of the developments that have occurred in this country, which is likely to witness

serious developments. In the past three years, this committee has begun to dictate its opinion to Sudanese President al-Bashir, to the Revolution Command Council, to al-Turabi, and to the Islamic Front's conventional leadership.

It seems that this committee is behind the suspension, practically, of the so-called Revolution Command Council. It is said in this regard that four council members have frozen their membership and retreated to their homes in protest of the 40-member committee's encroachments, of its interference in everything, big or small, and its imposition of its opinions on al-Bashir and on al-Turabi's front.

Expected Confrontation

Another confirmed testimony says that two months ago the 40-member committee drafted a memorandum and asked one of its members to deliver it to al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, a capable officer and the actual leader of al-Bashir's team. The memorandum demanded dissolving the Revolution Command Council and ending allusions to ousting the Islamic tendency from positions of power. Reports say that the committee was about to stage a military coup and arrest and execute al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih had al-Turabi not intervened, pacified the situation, and persuaded the committee that the time for such a step has not arrived yet and that any confrontation between al-Turabi's front and al-Bashir team will lead to a catastrophe.

According to circulated assessments, this incident bolstered the 40-member committee's influence in the Sudanese Armed Forces and cemented its influence in the civilian agencies. Some say that the statements that Dr. al-Turabi made recently, in which he talked about the need to dissolve the Revolution Command Council and the need to restore civilian life to the country, were intended to please the military committee's officers. It is known that al-Bashir immediately proceeded to make statements, saying that that is still premature to restore civilian life.

Despite this, all signs indicate that the Revolution Command Council's days have become numbered and that al-Bashir may be kept for a time as a facade for the 40-member committee, which is considered the striking military wing of al-Turabi's outwardly-dissolved front. But ultimately, he will find himself compelled to either embark on a suicidal confrontation or choose to retreat to his home.

The committee officers have gained control of all Sudanese intelligence branches and have formed a secret agency under the name of the Islamic Front Security. This agency has become the strongest and has infiltrated all of the military sectors and civilian fields. Any student wishing to enroll in the Military Academy has to gain the recommendation of this agency, which does not permit recruiting any young man suspected of espousing opposition opinions.

According to reports from varied sources, Iranian-Sudanese cooperation goes through this particular channel. Sudanese-Iranian relations, which al-Turabi tries to confine to the Arab-Islamic People's Congress organization (which he heads), are actually confined to the 40-member committee and to the agencies it controls. Coordination in this area has reached the point of coordination on minute details.

What is surprising is that when al-Bashir is asked about the extent of Iranian infiltration in Sudan, he resorts to reiterating a phrase that al-Turabi has often repeated to reporters and the media, namely that there is not even an Iranian military attache in Khartoum and that Iranian presence in Sudan does not go beyond the Iranian Embassy and this embassy's cultural attache.

The truth is that most opposition circles deny that they have seen a [Iranian] military presence in Sudan. But these circles emphasize that Iranians move quietly and intelligently, that they have taken charge of training the Sudanese security agencies, and that this training includes the areas of interrogating and pursuing the opposition and fragmenting the forces and parties opposed to the existing regime.

Liquidation Is Possible

Whereas all opposition leaders at home find it unlikely that a military coup will be staged against the regime of al-Bashir and of al-Turabi's front because of the strong control the aforementioned committee has over the armed forces, they talk of a raging secret struggle between the committee officers on the one hand and the Sudanese president and his supporters on the other. Opposition leaders at home say that liquidation is possible and that the coming period will be the period of confrontation between al-Bashir and the front.

In this respect, internal opposition leaders agree that al-Bashir is the weaker party. They do not find it unlikely that the Sudanese will wake up one morning to see the Sudanese president jailed on the charge of national treason.

Figures and Indications

- The black-market exchange rate has reached 180 Sudanese pounds per dollar. The official exchange rate is 123 pounds per dollar.
- The price of a kilogram of meat amounts to 300 pounds, whereas the average individual income is 3,000 pounds monthly.
- The Central Bank foreign exchange reserve is just \$5 million. Reports say that the government continues to print money without any cover.
- Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir spends just one day, namely Sunday, at the prime minister's office. The other days of the week, he shuttles between the Army command and the Republican Palace.

Commentator Finds Situation Nightmarish

93AF0484B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
16 Mar 93 p 8

[Commentary by Muhammad al-Hasan Ahmad]

[Text] Last Wednesday was a historical day for the Sudanese regime, watched throughout the world and in Sudan. On that day, the government expropriated the Khartoum branch of Cairo University, which had educated generations of Sudanese for some 40 years and whose annual budget, estimated at about 450 million Sudanese pounds, had been paid by Egypt. That same morning, the UN Human Rights Commission, meeting at the United Nations in Geneva, issued an especially strong condemnation of the Sudanese regime, detailing all aspects of the regime's human rights abuses, including torture, expulsion, summary execution, ethnic cleansing, impedance of the delivery of aid, and the denial of freedoms. This condemnation resulted in a recommendation that calls for the appointment of a special reporter who would reside in Sudan to monitor all human rights incidents and to whom the government would guarantee free, unrestricted access by any person wishing to see him. If the government accepts this recommendation, the people will become free of the government's oppression and will confront its reprehensible actions, possibly presaging its removal. If the government rejects this recommendation, the world may confront it with deterrent sanctions.

That evening, Sudan was also the subject of an inquiry before the U.S. Congressional Subcommittee on African Affairs. The assistant secretary of state for African affairs testified that the Sudanese regime has amassed the worst record in human and international relations. He mentioned measures that had been taken against the Sudanese regime and strongly hinted at many strong, punitive measures to come.

In his testimony, the assistant secretary said, among other things, that "Khartoum is harboring known terrorists and terrorist groups, including Hizballah, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad Movement. He said that members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard are active in Sudan and that Khartoum has become a station for contacts with terrorist groups supported by Iran and extremists in North Africa. His incisive statements no doubt underscore the fact that the United States is convinced of what we and the world have been repeating for more than two years [that Sudan maintains links with terrorists], which the United States has described on various occasions as being supported by information, possibilities, indications, and unequivocal certainty.

Regarding definite measures, the assistant secretary said, "Washington has asked its allies to join it in banning the export of weapons to Sudan." However, the strongest hint regarding future measures against the regime could be his statement that "we have clarified to the Sudanese that they are on the verge of being classified as a state sponsor of terrorism."

He warned Sudan that it would be placed on the list of state sponsors of terrorism if persons on its territory are responsible for a terrorist act. He said that the Clinton administration is studying the idea of establishing safe areas in southern Sudan to protect refugees fleeing from the civil war and famine that threaten millions of Sudanese with a tragedy similar to what is happening in Somalia. He said that if aid workers were not allowed to reach areas in need of aid to prevent a new disaster, the United States would study other options to ensure that aid got through.

Therefore, last Wednesday can be described as the Sudanese regime's worst day and the Sudanese people's saddest day. It was perhaps a turning point between two eras—between the regime's burning of all of its cards before the last candles of its ardor and passion in power are extinguished and a new era that is taking shape in the womb of fate, surrounded by hopes of deliverance from oppression and by fears of Sudan's division to punish the north for the acts which it has perpetrated, first on behalf of Arab identity, and later on behalf of Islam, although neither Sudan or Islam bear responsibility for these acts.

The decision to nationalize, expropriate, or revoke the license of Cairo University's Khartoum branch appears to be a desperate reaction on the part of the government in Khartoum stemming from the extreme frustration and despair over its existence which it felt that Wednesday. The decision [to implement the decision to expropriate the branch] severs every link between the two peoples and countries, despite the government's yearning for what it reckons to be its historical responsibility toward Egypt. The decision had actually been made, but its implementation had been deferred until after May, when final annual examinations were to have ended and students were to have been on vacation. It came as a surprise, given the absence of unrest among university students, who number, without exaggerating, the total number of students at [other] Sudanese universities. Thus, at the time the regime abolished Egyptian education, it made an exception of the university, because of the approaching end of the academic year and the students' dispersal. The [implementation of the] decision was hastened by the regime's indifference to the students' welfare at the very least. It was also perhaps hastened by the regime's despair of surviving until the university break. At the very least, this decision to burn the last bridge of cultural continuity between Egypt and Sudan is perhaps the price the regime is paying for its next drop of oil from Iran. This is against the backdrop of the government's total bankruptcy and the fuel shortage. Cars are being rationed to only one or two gallons of gasoline weekly. The shortage is on the verge of putting the common people out of work, and the regime has not had the fortune of Iran fulfilling its needs, except on a drop by drop basis. It therefore hastened to take this step, so that one or two oil tankers would arrive. If we allow this assumption, the question becomes: What now? The more the regime clings to Iran, the further it moves away from the world and into the ranks classified

as terrorist. The regime has in no way absorbed the lesson of its human rights violations. It thinks that Egypt is behind all that has befallen it. It imagines that Egypt is especially capable of blackmailing or subjugating it, or changing the government in Sudan. At times, the Sudanese regime succumbs to delusions of grandeur, which are incurable in the untenable situation into which it has gotten itself. It believes that, with the exception of the United States, it alone can determine its own course. The regime is acting based on an illusion of power. When it collides with reality, it becomes seized by despair, which compels it to take hysterical decisions such as seizing Cairo University's Khartoum branch. It thinks that this decision damages Egypt, but the obvious truth is that it damages Sudan by putting out 30,000 students or, in the best of cases, by obliging the Sudanese Government to pay this university's half-billion pounds in expenses, which Egypt had covered as a symbol of the connection between the two peoples. How can the Sudanese people raise this sum when their entire economy has been bled and its funds plundered, and when Sudanese faculty have migrated from the country? Last Wednesday was truly a sad day for all Sudanese as they watched the regime trample upon the Sudanese people's gains by expropriating Cairo University's Khartoum branch, and bringing on the resolutions of condemnation issued in Geneva, in addition to the positions which emerged in the American foreign affairs committee. Those positions stamp Sudan with all that is harmful to it as a nation because of the acts of the group ruling it. Sudan's destiny will be jeopardized if these positions result in Sudan's classification as a state sponsor of terror, or in the imposition of measures leading to the country's division.

The regime—instead of shaking off its illusions of power or the despair which befalls it at times, and facing reality courageously—continues to stumble and rush increasingly faster into more dilemmas, which will bring it only catastrophes, as if it were hastening toward its final end, striving for Sudan's end at the same time! However, the Sudanese people will not let the al-Turabi Front realize the slogan "Support me, oppose my enemies." Rather, it will call it to strict account commensurate with what it has perpetrated against the Sudanese people, its neighbors, its brothers, and its friends, because the front has transformed Sudan into one of the worst human nightmares in the world, according to the assistant secretary of state in his testimony before the foreign affairs committee in the U.S. Congress.

Opposition Parties' Effectiveness Assessed

93AF0485A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
24 Mar 93 pp 36-38

[Article: "Sudan: What Are Opposition Forces, and How Do They Operate"]

[Text] In his book *The Islamic Movement in Sudan*, Dr. Hasan al-Turabi says in explanation of the scheme he has followed to fuse all the traditional popular forces,

including Sufi movements, in his front: "This, then, is the era in which the popular organic explosion has occurred, in which the people's tribal and Sufi capabilities have been absorbed, and in which an endeavor has been made to enroll all of society in the movement. The group has, by its nature, begun to be transformed into the society."

To put it more clearly, al-Turabi has emphasized repeatedly in the past three years that he keeps in sight the goal of destroying the forces which have popular and mass support in Sudan and that he seeks to pull the rug from under the feet of the deep-rooted movements, especially al-Ummah Party, led by al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, and the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP], led by Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani.

Close associates of al-Turabi's say that his adoption of the Islamic line in Sudan falls within the framework of his early plan to control the Sufi movements, which represent a broad sector of the Sudanese people, and to destroy their historical leaderships because he realized at an early phase the futility of trying to confront these movements and to pull the rug from under the feet of their deep-rooted leaderships through nationalist and leftist parties and through secular slogans.

Al-Turabi has stated repeatedly, and his statements have agreed with those of Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, that the plan followed currently seeks to absorb the popular bases, the middle-level leaders, and some top-level leaders of the al-Ummah Party and the DUP, thus leaving the established leaderships without any bases.

New Front

Even though al-Turabi has been able to draw some minor figures to the regime's circle with inducements and to appoint them to top level positions, he hasn't been able, despite the diverse methods he has employed, to penetrate the popular base of the two main parties, namely al-Ummah and the DUP, which he characterizes as sectarian and as two parties moving in the opposite direction of history's movement.

According to assessments, al-Turabi, who plans to become Sudan's direct president and not president by proxy, is considering the creation of a broad organization to replace the [Islamic] front, which is considered formally dissolved but which exists on the real ground. It is the prevalent belief that this organization will have an Islamic name so as to please the Islamic Front's hawks on the one hand and to be able to compete with the Sufi movements and to draw their popular bases away from them on the other.

Opposition Forces

But what are the influential opposition forces and how do they operate and move against the regime?

Currently, there are four main forces in Sudan, in addition to some independent forces and organizations that are hostile to the regime. These forces are al-Ummah Party, which is considered the political instrument of al-Ansar sect and which is led by former Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi; the DUP, which is the political instrument of al-Khatmiyah sect which is led by Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani; the Sudanese Communist Party, which is led by Ibrahim Naqdi; and the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, which has weakened somewhat in recent years but which continues to have some presence on the political map.

It is well known that these parties have seen periods of estrangement and confrontation with each other throughout Sudan's modern history. The DUP has opposed al-Ummah Party repeatedly and the Ba'th Party has opposed the communist party several times. But since al-Turabi monopolized power and allied himself with the so-called Salvation Revolution, these parties have abandoned their past hostilities and have joined in a single alliance which raises the slogan of restoring democracy and toppling the military regime and the single-party rule.

The truth is that these parties derive their strength from the Sufi movements that have a deep-rooted history in Sudan and that enjoy great popularity, namely the al-Mahdiah (al-Ansar) movement, the Khatmiyah-Mirghaniyah movement, and the al-Idrisiyah movement, led currently by Muhammad al-Hasan al-Idrisi. Even though this movement declares that it is not political and even though it has been trying to mediate between the regime and the opposition, al-Idrisiyah has begun to move closer and closer to the opposition trenches under the impact of al-Turabi's abovementioned projections. These movements feel that al-Turabi, who has no historical or traditional leadership in his background, plans to destroy them, to crush their leaderships, and to absorb them in his front. Thus, they have disregarded all their differences and lined up side by side to avert the danger facing them, thus forming the backbone and the strong wall on which all the opposition forces, whether leftist or pan-Arab, national or religious, can lean.

In this regard, al-Turabi has tried, through the front's and the regime's agencies, to create splits among these forces and movements and within each of them. But he has achieved no success and has accomplished no serious step. For example, al-Turabi, who is married to al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's sister, tried to create a crisis between al-Sadiq and his uncle, Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mahdi, over leadership of al-Ansar. But this endeavor failed, and matters have been settled in a way that let Ahmad be leader of al-Ansar sect and al-Sadiq be leader of al-Ummah Party, which relies on al-Mahdiah movement's legacy.

Opposition Conditions

Inasmuch as he has been exerting utmost efforts to destroy the two main parties and the major Sufi movements, namely the al-Ansar, al-Khatmiyah, and al-Idrisiyah, al-Turabi has also been trying to extend bridges toward these parties and movements through mediation efforts, including a mediation undertaken recently by al-Sharif Muhammad al-Hasan al-Idrisi. Opposition leaders say that every time storms blow on the military regime and the regime of his ruling front, al-Turabi tries to bend, even if only a little, and that in wake of the recently-escalating foreign and domestic pressure, he has been seeking conciliation with the main parties and forces so as to absorb this pressure and to exploit the element of time as much as possible.

In response to a question by AL-MAJALLAH, a prominent leader of one of the two main opposition parties has said, "We have become experts in al-Turabi's games. We know that he is one who changes his colors and moves from trench to trench most often." This leader went on to add that this is why we all opposition forces have agreed on a unified position within the following conditions:

- First, set a timetable to end the military rule and hold general elections to restore democratic life to the country.
- Second, release all political detainees, on whose numbers estimates vary. While the regime says they count only in the dozens, opposition circles say they count in the tens of thousands.
- Third, reinstate all dismissed military personnel and civil servants in their positions. In this regard, opposition statements say that those dismissed from the service in wake of the so-called Salvation Revolution amount to nearly 150,000.
- Fourth, end the front's infiltration of the state and government agencies; halt the scheme to control the armed forces, and reevaluate all the groups that have been graduated from military academies in the past three years.

Opposition Plans

Because the opposition parties and forces realized that the goal behind al-Turabi's talk about national reconciliation at this particular time is to absorb the foreign campaigns and the domestic pressure, they have resorted in the period since the visit of Pope John Paul II to Sudan to elevating their performance, tightening their control, and focusing on the following points:

- Uniting the student sector forces and relying on this sector for daily activity, embodied in demonstrations, strikes, and the distribution of opposition statements.
- Observing the economic situation and living affairs, magnifying the regime's mistakes in this regard, and trying to convey accurate information to the ordinary citizen as quickly as possible.

- Avoiding confrontation with the military team, focusing the opposition campaign on al-Turabi and his front, lauding the armed forces constantly, and expressing fear for these forces from control by the front officers.
- Stating constantly that the military regime is the cause of the existing problem in the north and the Halayib problem and that it is responsible for leading the southern crisis to its current condition and for blocking the path in the face of all the endeavors made by the regime of the democratic period to develop a peaceful solution to this problem.

It can be emphasized that almost none of the opposition forces or their factions seek to change the existing regime by military coup. Perhaps because they realize the impossibility of such a coup in light of the front's control of the armed forces, the opposition forces are working for a sweeping popular rebellion similar to the rebellion which erupted in 1985 and toppled former President Ja'far al-Numayri's regime.

According to a prominent leader of one of the main opposition parties, the opposition is focusing currently on the possibility of creating a rift between the Revolution Command Council and the military team on the one hand al-Turabi and the Islamic front on the other. But it seems that al-Turabi is aware of the true nature of this plan. This is why he tries to adapt as much as possible to the military's tendencies while trying at the same time to complete the front's control of the armed forces.

It is certain that the opposition, which relies on the two main parties (al-Ummah and DUP) who derive their strength from the Sufi movements that have great influence on the Sudanese scene, is much stronger than it is depicted abroad. It is also certain that the worsening economic conditions have reached the red lines.

SNP's Ghabush Advocates Adding 3 Regions

93AF0499D London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Apr 93 p 7

[Article: "Sudanese Political Leader Calls for Redivision of Sudan"]

[Text] Khartoum—Father Philip Ghabush, head of the dissolved Sudanese National Party (SNP), called on the Sudanese Government to add three semi-independent confederated regions to the group of nine regions that form Sudan's present federal system.

In an interview in Khartoum with AL-HAYAH, Ghabush indicated that the Sudanese government's current federal system is "barren, undeveloped, and unfair to the rights of all Sudanese." He indicated that a confederation would suit the Sudan's religious, ethnic, and cultural pluralism.

He named the three sectors he called for adding as the Nuba Mountains, the (al-Anqasna) sector, and South Darfur. He said that these sectors "are now witnessing

savage fighting between their inhabitants and Sudanese Government forces" and that the fighting would stop "only by this just action."

He added that he had presented this proposal during his meeting with the chairman of the Sudanese National Council, Muhammad Amin Khalifah, and the chairman of the council's peace department, Jabir al-Rida, as well as other figures from the Nuba Mountains.

Ghabush described the Sudanese Government's negotiations in Abuja with the rebel movement as "futile and doomed to failure." He added that the talks "have no solid ground to stand on" and that "broad sectors of the whole Sudanese people are not represented."

He said that he did not agree with the policies the Sudanese Government was proposing regarding peace, a federal system of government, and the application of Islamic law. "The current application of Islamic law in Sudan is unsound and involves many clear violations of citizens' rights by those applying the law." He stated that he should not be opposed to it "if it flowed from a purely Koranic constitution."

Ghabush criticized the campaign the government has launched in the Nuba Mountains. "We deplore it," he said, "because it is a clear violation of the rights of Christian and Muslim citizens alike." He emphatically rejected "the Sudanese Government's mixing of religion and politics" and called for dealing with all Sudanese national issues in a peaceful framework apart from religion, racism, and tribal feuds.

On the question of whether the rebel Yusuf Kuwah, a Nuba mountainer who recently assumed the position of number-two leader of the SPLA's Torit wing led by Colonel John Garang, represents a Nuba voice within the movement and to what extent they accepted what he was doing alongside the SPLM, Ghabush said, "Yusuf Kuwah has a cause and therefore took up arms, but we disagree with his taking up arms, because we believe that a solution to the Sudan's problem does not lie in guns."

Regarding the lack of Nuba participation in the current Sudanese Government, Ghabush said that he had met President 'Umar al-Bashir and that the latter had told him in plain words that he did not trust the Nuba mountainers.

Dissident SPLM Factions Announce Merger

93AF0499A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Apr 93 p 7

[Article by Sulayman Salim: "3 SPLM Factions Announce Merger Under Mashar's Leadership"]

[Text] Nairobi—Three Sudanese factions that split from the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] and opposed the movement's Torit wing headed by Colonel John Garang have announced their merger into one group and have formed a 22-member "National Executive Committee for the Transition Period" headed by Riak Mashar, the leader of the al-Nasir wing.

The Executive Committee announced an immediate unilateral cease-fire, indicated its commitment to a

peaceful settlement of the war in southern Sudan, and showed readiness to begin peace negotiations immediately with the Sudanese government.

Leaders of the three SPLM wings (the al-Nasir wing, the William Nyuan wing, and the Carabino [Kuany Bol] group) held a press conference yesterday in Nairobi and announced the merger of the three wings. They issued a joint communique that included the following:

"On 20 February, the organization Workers for Peace in Africa invited leaders of the SPLM; its military wing, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA]; and the groups associated with the two organizations to hold a new round of talks aimed at unifying the divided movement. All the groups agreed, except the Torit group led by Col. Garang. The al-Nasir, William Nyuan, and Carabino groups held talks in Nairobi from 14 to 22 March. All were resolved to reunite the SPLM, SPLA, and the people of southern Sudan. At the talks there was discussion of subjects and problems that must be resolved in order to achieve our strategic goal of unifying the movement and the people."

The communique added: "The Nairobi conference reached agreement on the issues that were discussed. It decided that senior leaders of the groups involved would meet in Kongor to ratify the resolutions of the Nairobi conference."

"The Kongor meeting was held on 25 and 26 March and was attended by Dr. Riak Mashar, Dr. Lam Akol, William Nyuan, Joseph (Oduho), Carabino Kuany Bol, and Arok Thuon Arok. The meeting carefully studied and approved the resolutions of the Nairobi conference. It also approved the provisional leadership structure and form of the SPLM and SPLA. We proclaim to all Southerners and to whoever wishes the South well that our unity has now become a reality. After reaching political and military unity of the divided movement, we in the movement and army leadership studied issues of war and peace in the country and ways of alleviating the suffering of our people. We decided the following:

- A unilateral cease-fire will be announced, effective immediately. The united forces of the SPLM and SPLA will cease participating in offensive military operations, except to exercise their legitimate right of self-defense.
- The man outside this unity is Col. Garang. We therefore again beseech him a final time to join our people's march to peace and unity. If Garang continues to obstruct unity efforts as he has demonstrated by his behavior thus far, officers, junior officers, and all soldiers under his command will have to consult their consciences, disobey him, and join the unified SPLM and SPLA. We welcome everybody's contribution.
- The new leadership represents the people in the Sudanese South and speaks for all their groups. It therefore explicitly condemns all forms of tribalism and sectarianism.

- We believe that the current war cannot be won by military means. The united SPLM and SPLA therefore are committed to a peaceful settlement of the conflict. In this regard, the unified leadership has drafted a detailed program for reaching a comprehensive peaceful settlement in Sudan. We are ready to begin peace talks with the government of Sudan if or when it wishes.
- The new leadership calls for holding reconciliation conferences between neighboring tribes harmed by the fighting between different SPLA factions since 1991."

Ummah Party Official Interviewed

93AF0484C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 Mar 93 p 6

[Interview with Mubarak al-Mahdi by Muhammad al-Hasan Ahmad and 'Uthman Mirghani in London; date not given]

[Text] London—Against the backdrop of rapidly occurring developments in Sudan, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT met with Mubarak al-Mahdi, who held a number of cabinet positions in Sudan during the democratic period, including industry and commerce, economic planning, and interior portfolios. He is now in charge of external activity in the al-Ummah Party. This interview concerns key issues in politics, economics, foreign relations; the strength and weakness of the government and the opposition; and rumors of international intervention measures regarding Sudan.

The following is the text of the interview:

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The current government has been in power for four years. Does this continuity stem from the government's strength or the opposition's weakness?

[Al-Mahdi] I do not believe that it is correct to frame the issue in this way. Nonetheless, the ruling Front Party is 50 years old. It has substantial organizational experience and a broad economic base. It also has an alliance with military groups, which enabled it to conspire against democracy in regional and international circumstances that allowed it to engage in a deception and thus gain some support. That support gave the regime a major push, enabling it to take power by using its organizational and economic capabilities as well as a large measure of violence to confront an unarmed people. Everyone knows how the regime aimed bullets at the chests of demonstrators, issued death sentences against strikers, and executed countless military personnel who opposed their coup. Political forces [opposing the regime] faced several options. One was to take up arms against the regime. Such a course entail consequences, calculations, circumstances, and risks, including Sudan's transformation into another Somalia or Liberia. However, our main option was to outflank the regime in order to weaken it and sap it of all of its strength, so that it would become an ineffective weapon in the activity

and growth on which it relies. Therefore, the political game that we played with the regime aimed to transform the force of arms on which it relies into a source of distress for it abroad and into an ineffective source of stability for it domestically.

The regime most certainly faces fatal isolation from all of its brothers and friends in the world. International society condemns it for its human rights abuses. The regime no longer openly declares its oppressive strength. It has become ashamed of it. Sometimes, it argues that it has renounced violence. Sometimes, it lies that it has never practiced violence and has been unjustly and libelously accused of doing so. Thus, the people's outflanking has succeeded in invalidating the regime's reliance on the tyranny of force. The people will now use many new methods and innovations, especially given that the regime is now moving toward its demise.

Because politics and economics are two sides of the same coin, the regime's suppressive force has weakened considerably more than some imagine. How will the tanks used by the front to guard the regime move if they lack fuel? How will bullets be loaded into guns if there are no revenues? Even as we talk, I have before me corroborated information that checks in the amount of three billion Sudanese pounds—all or most issued by the armed forces—were bounced by the banks due to insufficient funds because of the economic crisis.

Thus, even the weapons on which they rely to oppress, terrorize, and kindle the blaze of war have been robbed of their power through a mere outflanking maneuver based on peaceful means.

The Agricultural Revolution Slogan

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] You speak of an economic collapse so extensive that the war machine on which the regime relies is suffering from a shortage of bullets and fuel. The government, on the other hand, stresses that it has generated an unprecedented agricultural revolution in Sudan, and that Sudan has begun to export surpluses of what it used to import in much greater quantities. What is the truth?

[Al-Mahdi] Fine, lest we enter into any deceptions, let us begin with the ABC's of agricultural economics in Sudan. It is well known that Sudanese agriculture is based on irrigation and rainfall. Irrigation is based on machines. Rain-based agriculture is traditional agriculture. I challenge anyone to show me an expansion undertaken by the regime in either of these areas. Regarding irrigation-based agriculture, has the regime established a project such as the al-Jazirah Project, the extension of the carriers, or the al-Rahad Project? Absolutely nothing. Nor have any new rain-based agriculture projects been implemented. In no way has the regime gone beyond managing existing projects or reclaimed additional land. Thus, it cannot claim to have achieved an agricultural expansion. This basic fact of the crisis is essential to demolishing the foundations of the regime's claims.

We can also speak of the senselessness of the regime's agricultural policies.

First, the regime cut back cotton growing in al-Jazirah, planting most of its areas with wheat instead, which led to a drop in Sudan's agriculture revenues. The regime thus weakened Sudan's foreign currency proceeds in exchange for wheat, most of which we had been receiving as seed and aid. Consequently, Sudan was denied income from cotton, which fell from \$300 million in 1988-89 to \$30 million in 1992-93, because the government—with its harebrained policies based on such empty slogans as "we will eat what we sow"—thought that planting wheat was the acme of liberalization and sovereignty.

Last month, the agriculture minister acknowledged the error of expanding wheat cultivation at the expense of cotton. As is known, the government reduced the area sown with cotton from 800,000 feddans to only 300,000 feddans.

I hope that this acknowledgement will be accompanied by an objective view that concedes that Sudan's climate is unsuited to wheat growing. It is a fundamental of economics for a country to specialize in, and export, crops suited to its climate, and to buy what it cannot produce economically. Before the regime took power, Sudan used to plant an average of about 300,000 feddans of wheat, produce 200,000-250,000 tons of wheat, and cover the balance of wheat consumption, 75,000 tons, with foreign aid and imports.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What about the abundant production of durra and the expansion of its cultivation?

[Al-Mahdi] The areas planted with durra have contracted and have not increased at all. For example, some traditional production areas, such as (Habilah) in Western Sudan, have been removed from the traditional domain of agriculture due to the disruption of the security situation. Total production this year is 2.9 million tons, which meets consumption needs, but is not enough for export. Production in 1988, during the democratic period, was 5 million tons. Throughout the years of the "salvation" period, production did not exceed more than 2 million tons on the average, and during all of the years of democracy, production averaged no less than 3 million tons of durra. Thus, the agricultural revolution of which the regime speaks is clearly a disaster that the regime is attempting to cover up by concocting a false media campaign.

The Exportation of Sugar

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What about the exportation of sugar and the fact that it is no longer necessary to import it?

[Al-Mahdi] That is the regime's biggest deception. Each Sudanese' share of sugar was 20 kg. When the current regime came to power, the share per person dropped to 5 kg and the price increased 10 times. Consequently, the

surplus that was realized and transferred to the commercial and free markets was an imaginary surplus stemming from a drop in the citizen's share.

Also, the production of the al-Kinana Sugar Plant, Sudan's main producer, dropped from 310,000 tons in 1987-88 to less than 245,000 tons. This means that the current government's slogans are incorrect.

The big lie regarding the exportation of sugar and the end of the need to import sugar is that the al-Kinana sugar project was established with Arab capital, and the export of sugar is not due to a surplus, but to the shareholders' insistence on exercising their right to export an agreed amount of production. The project's charter stipulates that Sudan shall receive the proceeds of 150,000 tons of production in domestic currency, and that the balance of production shall be sold for hard currency. During the Numayri period and the democratic period, Sudan used to purchase the entire crop, because it was more favorable for it to buy it domestically rather than exporting this quantity and then buying sugar abroad. In this way, Sudan at least saved shipping costs. Under this arrangement, Sudan paid for production in excess of the first 150,000 tons in hard currency to cover the plant's spare parts requirements, foreign technicians' salaries, and Arab shareholders' dividends.

During the May period, the government accumulated \$145 million in debts, which consisted of money due to the al-Kinana Sugar Plant for sugar sold for hard currency. During the democratic period, we made efforts to settle this debt in response to shareholders' protests. We succeeded to a large degree in settling it.

Under the current government, the debt has accumulated again. The shareholders protested and pressured to be allowed to export the share originally designated for export. Because political relations between the Sudanese Government and the participating Arab countries are poor, shareholders refused to soften their position. Moreover, since 1990, the meetings of the sugar plant's board of directors have been held outside of Sudan because the shareholders have refused to travel to Sudan. Under a threat to close the plant, the Sudanese Government was compelled to respond to the shareholders' demand to export. Therefore, al-Kinana Sugar Company began to export production in excess of the first 150,000 tons. This year, the export of 90,000 tons has been contracted. This is the reason for the current sugar crisis.

Therefore, the export of sugar is not due to a surplus, but to the shareholders' insistence on their right to export quantities in excess of the first 150,000 tons.

The true consumption of sugar in Sudan totals 600,000 tons, compared to current production, which averages no more than 450,000 tons.

This is the situation. Assertions of an agricultural revolution are untrue. The government has not established

any new project. Moreover, it has caused major economic damage, including the creation of inflation through deficit spending.

It is impossible to speak of self-sufficiency and an agricultural revolution. Rather, we see citizens in urban areas threatened with starvation, not because of occasional shortages of goods, but because of their inability to purchase them due to the bane of excessive inflation, which the current government introduced to Sudan. The money supply increased from 9 billion pounds in 1989 to 60 billion pounds in 1993. This increase is not due to an expansion of the economic base. It is due to an economic contraction stemming from a decline in the government's income from customs and industrial output fees after factories stopped operating because of a lack of raw materials and spare parts. It is also due to the general recession in the economy caused by the suspension of development programs that had been contributing to the growth of commercial and economic activity.

In addition, the government has increased its spending on its numerous security agencies, on escalation of the war in the south, and on political disbursements under various headings (youth, social, and women's organizations, and political organizations such as the Martyr and Comrades Organization, the Youth of the Fatherland Organization, and others). All of these spending items led to large, imprudent outlays offering no return. The government also deceived itself by financing suspended development programs through deficit financing. Moreover, it has begun to purchase dollars on the black market to cover its main requirements for oil, arms, and insane political spending, which forced it to resort to printing money, for which it purchased a money printing press.

The budget was 146 billion pounds last year, compared to 47 billion the year before last. Even in this year's budget, spending is open-ended and unrestrained. The finance minister announces new fiscal measures every three months instead of at the start of the fiscal year as is customary.

The government has canceled free medical treatment and eliminated medicine subsidies, which has compounded the citizens' suffering. A worker now pays his entire salary for one course of malaria treatment (10 pills cost 1,500 pounds). Many citizens have removed their children from school, because they are unable to pay the fees and costs of breakfast, transportation, school uniforms, and books.

Some who are still able to give charity now pay their alms tax to several pharmacies, so that the latter can provide medicine to the needy who are unable to purchase it. In other words, medical treatment and medicine have now become a purview of charity.

In such a tragic situation as this, talk of economic or cultural achievement or an agricultural revolution is meaningless.

Islam in Sudan

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The government is currently promoting Islam as a slogan, declaring that it is establishing an Islamic state and, because of its Islamic cultural choice, fighting the West. Does this open the two major parties to the charge that they have failed to achieve any of the Islamic slogans despite their Islamic foundations?

[Al-Mahdi] True Islam in Sudan is represented by the Mahdist movement and the Sufi orders. The Sufi orders rekindled the flame of the Koran in Sudan and established cells and mosques. They taught the people their religion and contributed effectively to the Islam's peaceful spread to the south and the African continent through the countries neighboring Sudan.

Mahdism arose as a revolutionary movement to revive the youth of Islam in Sudan, establish an Islamic state, and apply Islamic law after Sudan was united. The Ansar in Sudan continued the legacy of the Mahdist revolution, protecting Islam in Sudan along with the Sufi orders, chief among which is the al-Khatmiyah order. They coexisted with members of other African religions and revealed religions in Sudan, chief among which is Christianity. They established the fire of the Koran and Islam throughout Sudan and the neighboring African countries. They attempted democratically to establish the rule of Islam in public and private life in the country in the ways that are best, with wisdom, with beautiful preaching, and with democratic consultation, adhering to the sublime's utterance, "Let there be no compulsion in religion [Koran, 2:256] and "Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in the ways that are best and most gracious" [Koran, 16:125]—God the great speaks the truth.

The group now ruling Sudan—the al-Turabi Front, which has been called by numerous names over the past 50 years since its inception, including the Muslim Brothers, Islamic Union, Islamic Covenant, Islamic National Front, and now National Salvation—represents Islam imported to Sudan from Egypt in the forties. It has focused on the mosque, education's role, the commercial class, and recently the army. It is part of the worldwide Muslim Brotherhood organization, which resurged in the cold war with financing from the West as an antidote to communism in the Arab and Islamic worlds. It benefited from the struggle in the Arab region with Nasirism and nationalism. It obtained for itself a large base of cadres and a large economic, organizational base. Thus, it was established primarily as an organization for countering communism; Islam was secondary. After communism fell and the cold war ended, these movements sought power and money. They began to use their secret organizations and organized cadres in an attempt to seize power. The movement succeeded in Sudan in its coup of 30 November 1989 by taking

advantage of the permissiveness of the democratic government, which had protected, tolerated, and opened all doors for it.

However, this group that claims power in Sudan in the name of Islam has no connection whatsoever to Islam. All of its actions and practices violate Islam. Islam is based on mercy, justice, freedom, and honor among humans. "We have honored the sons of Adam" [Koran, 17:70]—God the great speaks the truth. The group ruling in Sudan in the name of Islam rules with iron and fire, engaging in the most reprehensible types of oppression against the Sudanese people. The entire world—with its voluntary and international organizations that are involved in protecting human rights—has condemned it.

This group promotes the slogan of an Islamic state and maintains that it is applying Islamic laws. However, in reality, it has not applied one provision of Islamic law.

This regime is responsible for the entire world's hostility toward it because of its behavior and practices against its people and against regional stability. Al-Turabi and his front claim leadership of Islamic brotherhood movements in the Arab, Islamic world on the basis of their being the first group or movement to assume power in an Arab country. They have opened Sudan's doors to the harboring and training of members of Islamic groups and movements that have branched off from organizations of the Muslim Brothers to help them seize power in their countries. We possess considerable material evidence proving this regime's involvement in plans to undermine the stability of countries in the region and in the Arab and Islamic region in cooperation with Iran and Baghdad.

International Intervention

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Is the talk of international intervention in Sudan realistic or merely an escalation of the rhetoric? Would such intervention be justified or acceptable?

[Al-Mahdi] Calls for international intervention in Sudan are not being made in a vacuum. After the cold war ended, the United Nation's power was strengthened, and the major countries, led by America, became concerned with eliminating centers of bloody conflict in the world that affect international security and peace. Democracy and human rights are regarded as essential to settling conflicts and ending civil wars. The United Nations and other regional organizations have begun to exercise this role in different spots in the world—in Cambodia, Angola, Mozambique, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia, and Liberia.

In examining what is happening in Sudan, we find that all of the factors that led to UN intervention in the said countries apply to Sudan.

There is a civil war in southern and western Sudan in which thousands are dying. Sudan is experiencing a ruinous famine that is hitting areas affected by the war in

the south and west. As a result, tens of thousands are dying, the lives of hundreds of thousands are threatened, and the war is blocking international aid efforts known as the (lifeline) program.

Due to the war in the south and west, Sudan has been affected by deadly epidemics, the most salient being kala azar [visceral leishmaniasis]. It has killed about 40,000 citizens, according to World Health Organization reports, and is threatening the lives of more than half a million persons. It has even reached the "march" [masir-iyah] areas in the province of Kordofan.

Millions have left Sudan for Egypt, Uganda, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, and Western Europe due to war, subjugation, and eviction.

In brief, Sudan is experiencing intense subjugation, control, massacres, and inflation, which has placed even middle income earners on the verge of starvation in Khartoum.

International intervention measures in Sudan began in March 1992, when the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva issued its first condemnation of the Sudanese regime and appointed an international expert to monitor and observe human rights violations in Sudan and to submit a report to the commission's current meeting in Geneva. That meeting has issued a new condemnation of Sudan and appointed a permanent expert and observer of human rights in Sudan.

International intervention continued with a UN General Assembly resolution in December 1992, for which 104 countries voted, to condemn the Sudanese Government for its human rights violations.

International pressure continues through the resolutions of the General Assembly, the International Human Rights Commission, the U.S. Congress, the European Parliament, and the British House of Lords. The correct question is, has the matter reached the point of the Security Council being prompted to issue a resolution permitting direct military intervention or imposing political and economic sanctions on the Sudanese Government? The answer is affirmative. It is no secret that consultations on submitting this matter to the Security Council have actually begun, and the reasons that led to intervention in Somalia and Iraq to stop the collective dying and massacres nominate Sudan for the same destiny.

The current regime in Khartoum is responsible for all of this. It brought the country to this situation.

The Abuja Negotiations

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Will the negotiations being held between the government and the wings of the Garang movement, and preparations to hold a second round of negotiations in Abuja, produce peace and an end to the war?

[Al-Mahdi] The consultations held in Kampala and Nairobi with a view toward convening a second round of negotiations in Abuja between the government and the popular movement led by Garang will not result, I believe, in any new developments that would lead us to believe that the second Abuja round will be any more successful than the first Abuja round, the Addis Ababa round, or the Nairobi round in 1989. The reason is that the positions of the two parties have not changed. The Salvation government is offering an autocratic system of government under the control of the al-Turabi Front. Such an arrangement would extend the Front's authority and control over resources and all state agencies. To balance that, the government is offering the popular movement the opportunity to be absorbed into the central government by giving it formal representation. It is also offering to except the south from any Islamic measures in the framework of a sham federal system of government lacking any real authorities. Under these arrangements, the southerners would be in a much more inferior position relative to the position that they obtained from Numayri in 1972 and lost due to Numayri's decision 10 years later in 1982, which stemmed from his control of all authorities and mandates in a centralized framework.

For its part, the main current in the popular movement under Garang's leadership is promoting the slogan of a comprehensive solution to the problem of the war, the distribution of resources, and authority in Sudan under a democratic, pluralist regime. To balance that, Garang's movement is proposing a confederation with two separate constitutions and a two-year transitional period during which the south would be given self-determination, provided that this occurs under an agreement on the form of government in the country and the distribution of resources, and in a democratic framework.

As for the groups that have split off from Garang in the popular movement (the al-Nasir group and the William Nun group), they are calling for the separation of the south.

The parties' positions diverge widely. The al-Turabi front wants to exclude other political forces from participating in discussing Sudan's future, and the military solution has failed to end the war. All these considerations make a solution unlikely.

The problem of war in the country will only be solved in the framework of a comprehensive solution to the problem of government in the country through a national constitutional conference with the participation of all political powers, which would formulate the foundations of a permanent constitution for the country and open the way to free general elections and a decentralized government that would satisfy the aspirations of Sudan's different regions.

DUP, Ummah Parties Respond to Accusations*93AF0499C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Apr 93 p 7*

[Article: "DUP and Ummah Reply to al-Bashir's Charge That Opposition Sold Hala'ib Area"]

[Text] London—Sudan's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) said that the Sudanese Government, "having lost its credibility and its ability to confront deteriorating conditions in Sudan," was "arbitrarily" accusing the opposition of selling the Hala'ib area. At the same time, Sudan's Ummah Party pointed to "many contradictions in the Sudanese military government's positions" regarding the Egyptian-Sudanese dispute over the Hala'ib area.

Last Friday, the Sudanese president criticized opposition leaders living abroad, singling out DUP leader Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, Ummah Party general secretary Dr. 'Umar Nur-al-Da'im, and Mubarak al-Fadil, the party's official for overseas activity, saying: "They sold Hala'ib as they sold themselves for dollars." He accused al-Mirghani of "becoming rich from the sweat of toilers and of amassing 25 billion Sudanese pounds from poor people misled by sectarianism." He announced that citizens would be given title to residential land that the authorities had confiscated from al-Mirghani.

The DUP replied as follows to al-Bashir in a statement that AL-HAYAH received yesterday: "Al-Bashir's government has lost its credibility and its ability to confront the continued deterioration of living conditions in Sudan because of its policies that have led the country to international isolation. The government has arbitrarily begun to heap charges of selling Hala'ib on the opposition. Perhaps they do not know history, which shows that Mawlana Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani and President Isma'il al-Azhari by their wisdom protected the territory and unity of Sudan at the dawn of independence. Al-Bashir's government bears full responsibility for the country's split."

The statement explained: "Al-Mirghani's lands in Kas-sala (capital of the Eastern Region) go back in history to the al-Zarqa' Sultanate, when the Imam Sayyid Muhammad Ahmad al-Mirghani founded the Khat-miyah village of (Sunnayah). This disproves al-Bashir's claims and the allegation that these lands came from the sweat of toilers, and it proves his ignorance of history. It is ironic and amazing that the lands should be confiscated by people who proclaim the rule of Islam, which rejects attacks on the rights of people. Let 'Umar al-Bashir ask the merchants of the National Islamic Front (NIF) about how one exploits the sweat of toilers!" He added that al-Bashir was accusing the opposition and the former prime minister and Ummah Party leader al-Sadiq al-Mahdi of meeting the head of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), Dr. John Garang, "while he (al-Bashir) was intervening with presidents and Pope John Paul II to meet Garang."

Al-Mirghani is said to have sent a letter recently to President Husni Mubarak, criticizing "the policies and actions of the National Front" and warning of "their consequences, which extend beyond the present and future of the Sudan to harm its brothers and neighbors."

In a related development, the Ummah Party's official for overseas activity, Al-Fadil Mubarak al-Mahdi (former interior minister under the democratic regime), said, "The statements and positions of the Sudanese military government and its National Front leaders headed by 'Umar al-Bashir are very contradictory regarding the position on Hala'ib. At the beginning of the crisis, al-Bashir stated that Islam does not recognize borders, that Egypt and Sudan were extensions of each other, and that in this light Hala'ib and the conflict over it were meaningless. In another statement he said that he would never bear arms against brothers in Egypt, whatever they did. Yet now we see him declaring holy war against Egypt and saying he is ready to die as a martyr in Hala'ib, utterly contradicting his earlier positions." He added, "The explanation of the contradiction is that given the tightening domestic blockade, foreign condemnations of his government, which has lost all assets, and his inability to deal with the trial Sudan is experiencing, al-Bashir is trying to polarize national feeling against an imaginary enemy."

He added, "The current reality of Sudanese-Egyptian relations, with more than 3 million Sudanese living among the friendly people of Egypt and being treated as Egyptian citizens—this reality makes the shift of the confrontation to Hala'ib a shabby matter. Any border dispute between Egypt and Sudan could be remedied very simply by any national government supported by the Sudanese people. The problem of the Sudanese people now is not Hala'ib; it is restoring democracy and freedom, bringing peace, assuring the unity of the country, providing sustenance, and saving the country from economic collapse. These are the very goals that this dictatorial government of the front is preventing."

Regarding the criticism of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi that al-Bashir voiced in his statement, he said: "When al-Sadiq al-Mahdi in his party capacity met Colonel John Garang, he did so in search of peace; for continued war means defeat for the entire Sudan. Al-Bashir has been seeking long and hard to meet John Garang. He traveled accompanied by the businessman Tiny Roland aboard his private plane, seeking to meet Garang, as reported in the statement of the government delegation to the first Abuja talks in December 1992."

DUP Calls For Speedy Overthrow of Government*93AF0499B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Apr 93 p 4*

[Article: "Sudan's DUP Calls for Speedy Overthrow of Government"]

[Text] London—Muhammad 'Uthman 'Abdallah, secretary of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), issued a

statement in Cairo yesterday on the eighth anniversary of the April 1985 uprising. He greeted "the members of the Sudanese people who are standing in the front ranks of the national resistance." He greeted "the vanguard that from the very first moments opposed and proclaimed total rejection of the coup by al-Turabi's front."

The statement referred to the party's vanguard position, saying: "Committed to the policy of struggle laid down by its leader, Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, the DUP extends its hand to all Sudanese people and all honorable patriots to speed the end of the NIF [National Islamic Front] regime and establish a state of true democracy and justice that will preserve Sudan's territory and unity."

He added: "The DUP continues to deplore and condemn the regime's continued exercise of its repressive policy. The abusive language emanating from the head and major figures of the regime proves that the regime has lost its credibility and its ability to confront the continued deterioration."

"As for the ever increasing hostility against brothers in Egypt and repeated attacks on citizens, the al-Bashir regime will bear the consequences of everything that afflicts the country and its people. On this solemn anniversary, we affirm to the masses of our people at home and abroad our unshakable faith in the cause of our people. We will remain in the forefront of the struggle, giving it fuel and depth, until the regime of al-Turabi's front falls."

University's Students Discuss Illegal Arrests

93AF0458B London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
24 Mar 93 pp 38-39

[Unattributed interview with members of unidentified Sudanese university students council in Omdurman; date not given: "Student Opposition: Universities Placed Under Surveillance; Students Expelled for Political Reasons"]

[Text] Until a few years ago, al-Turabi's front controlled the political life at most Sudanese universities, especially in Khartoum University. But with the overthrow of the democratic regime more than three years ago, this control began to recede. Moreover, the national and pan-Arabist forces began to advance so very rapidly that they have gained control of student councils in most of the major universities.

It is well known that Sudan has six new universities, in addition to the old deep-rooted universities. They are the Khartoum University, Omdurman University, Omdurman Islamic University, Omdurman National University, the Sudanese University, and Cairo University. Recently, these universities have turned into strongholds for the forces opposing the regime of Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir and al-Turabi's front.

Because of the importance of the student opposition under current circumstances, AL-MAJALLAH has visited one of these universities and its student union council, which is comprised of a coalition that includes eight representatives of al-Ummah Party, eight independents, seven representatives of the Democratic Unionist Party, and seven representatives of the Democratic Front.

The truth is that it was not easy to get to this university, which is located in Omdurman. The eyes of the security men are everywhere, and the students who arranged this interview for AL-MAJALLAH were under strict surveillance. Foreigners in Khartoum cannot move about as easily as they did in the past. The student assigned to accompany us told us to steer as clear as possible off taxicabs parked in front of the hotel at which we stayed because all their drivers work for the security agencies. He told us to try to find a taxicab on a public road and to try to change it more than once for added security and precaution.

Finally, we arrived at the campus of the university we wanted and we found there somebody waiting for us at the main entrance. This student took us to a side hall where a number of the student council members were awaiting us. Those students represented a mixture of the main opposition forces, led by al-Ummah Party and the Democratic Unionist Party.

Arrests

Under strict guard, AL-MAJALLAH interviewed members of that university's students council who emphasized that their names and photos must not be published. The following is the text of the dialogue, which defines the nature of current conditions in Sudan:

[AL-MAJALLAH] Government officials say that arrests are made on a court warrant only. This contradicts what you say. So, which is true?

[Answer] The truth is that arrests are made almost daily. People are arrested in the streets, at their work places, and at their homes, without any court warrants, and they are detained for varying periods.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But according to what is said, arrests stopped sometime ago.

[Answer] There is no doubt that the major campaigns were halted somewhat in wake of the criticism addressed to the Sudanese Government by human rights committees and some political forces.

But the arrests continue, and hardly a day passes without new arrests being made.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Which agency makes these arrests?

[Answer] There are numerous security agencies in Sudan, and they all have their jails and their interrogation chambers. They all make arrests. For example, we

have the Revolution Security Agency, Public Security, the Security Police, and the Popular Defense.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Are all these agencies controlled by the government?

[Answer] There is no difference between the government and al-Turabi's front. However, the security agency controlled by the front directly is the Popular Defense. Ordinarily, this is the agency that makes arrests at universities and schools.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Considering that all of these agencies make arrests, what are the methods used by each agency, and how are they different from those of the other agencies?

[Answer] According to witnesses who have been arrested, the Popular Defense Agency, which is under direct control of al-Turabi's front, is the cruelest of these agencies. It engages in unimaginable acts, including the extinguishing of cigarettes on women's breasts and injecting detainees with burning liquids.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You talk about an Iranian presence. Have you noticed the presence of Iranians among those who interrogated you, or some of you?

[Answer] No, there were no Iranians among the interrogators. But some brothers have talked about the presence of Iranians as experts at the peripheral investigation bureaus. Moreover, the Iranians have trained and continue to train the front's security agencies and other government-controlled agencies.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You have said that arrest campaigns have subsided somewhat, especially since the pope's visit. When was the last time some of your colleagues in the political movement and the student movement were arrested?

[Answer] The arrests continue, and summons are made daily. There is a new kind of arrest procedure whereby security agencies order defendants to contact them at dawn every day for a period of at least a month. Every day, the individual summoned goes and waits from the early morning hours until the evening hours.

Confrontation

[AL-MAJALLAH] Are specific methods used in such summons and prosecutions?

[Answer] Yes. It has happened more than once that when the security agencies could not arrest the wanted defendant, they arrested his relatives.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What proofs do you have of this?

[Answer] Our proof of this are the names. The security agencies have arrested all of the relatives of Munir, a student at Cairo University, when they could not arrest Munir himself. On 17 February 1993, these agencies burned students at one of the universities with Molotovs because they insisted on establishing their union against

the government's will. The agencies have also withdrawn the diplomas and licenses of the attorneys who have tried to defend these students.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Are these practices confined to your university, or are the other universities also subjected to what you endure?

[Answer] All of the universities are subjected to what we are subjected to. Recently, the security agencies took Khartoum University students from their homes by force and compelled them to take their examinations. At al-Jazirah University, security men flogged female students in front of people.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Do you have names to prove this?

[Answer] At the outset of the Salvation Revolution, al-Turabi's front liquidated a large number of students, including Tariq Ibrahim; Ataya, a female student; and al-Bashir from Khartoum University. Moreover, two students died a few weeks ago while being interrogated by the Popular Defense.

[AL-MAJALLAH] And what is the position of the students of al-Turabi's front vis-a-vis these acts and arrests?

[Answer] The front's students are enrolled in the Popular Defense Committees, which are the front's intelligence agency. Therefore, these students suppress and attack the other students and participate in arresting them.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Are the reasons for the arrests political, or are there other reasons?

[Answer] No distinction is made between demands and political reasons. Large-scale arrests have been made at universities because the students protested the cancellation of housing and food subsidies, which made numerous students leave the university.

[AL-MAJALLAH] On the mention of universities, do the penalties include temporary or permanent dismissal?

[Answer] Of course. Sixty students were expelled from al-Jazirah University, 35 from Juba University, and 52 from Khartoum University for political reasons.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What are your political demands, and do you think that conciliation between the opposition and the regime is possible?

[Answer] It is not the belief that Dr. Hasan al-Turabi wants a national conciliation. He wants to control the country and to fuse all forces in the organization that he leads. Despite this conviction, our conditions for any national conciliation are clear, namely democracy.

Through democracy, all pending issues can be solved, and all urgent crises, including the problem of the south, can be settled.

Gasoline Shortage Causes Exorbitant Price

93AF0484A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
27 Mar 93 p 11

[Text] Khartoum (Qatar News Agency)—The fuel crisis in Sudan has reached alarming proportions. It is at its worst in the capital city of Khartoum, where the streets seem empty of cars due to the severe gasoline shortage following a decision to disburse only two gallons of gasoline per week to each private car.

The crisis has led to an increase in the price of a gallon of gasoline to 1,000 Sudanese pounds, instead of its official price of 150 Sudanese pounds.

Government officials display no optimism regarding an approaching end of the conflict, which began a month ago. Even Navy Brigadier General Salah-al-Din Karar, the energy minister, said that the crisis, "might extend for a longer period."

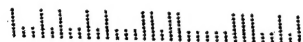
Colonel Yusuf 'Abd-al-Fattah, the deputy governor of Khartoum and economy minister, said that the gasoline ration will be increased when the situation improves, without specifying when an improvement could be expected.

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